

USFS reworking where to play in Sierra snow

By Benjamin Spillman, Reno Gazette-Journal

There's a reason why during winter it can be hard to find a parking place along Mount Rose Highway near the Tahoe Meadows and Chickadee Ridge.

The short stretch of road is the best place to access some of the most scenic backcountry in Nevada, an area that includes snow-covered meadows, alpine peaks and Lake Tahoe views.

It's also the epicenter of a debate over winter access to public land in the Sierra Nevada as U.S. Forest Service units throughout the range are in the process of reworking their winter travel management plans.

Six separate Forest Service units, Lake Tahoe Basin, Tahoe, Eldorado, Lassen and Stanislaus, and Plumas are in varying stages of reworking their plans, some of which haven't been updated for decades.

The result could be new boundaries that limit where people can ride snowmobiles and set aside areas that are restricted to human-powered recreation such as snowshoeing and backcountry skiing.

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